

Diary Study of Tertiary Teachers' Emotions

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Abstract

The purpose of this diary study was to investigate the emotions experienced by tertiary teachers in their teaching contexts. Fifteen tertiary teachers from four tertiary institutions in New Zealand (one university, one polytechnic, and two private tertiary providers) completed emotion diaries based on Oatley and Duncan's (1992) format, over five days. The number of emotions recorded ranged from one to four per day. Happiness and satisfaction were the two most frequently recorded positive emotions; anger and disappointment the most frequent negative emotions. Tension was the most frequently recorded bodily effect - similar to Oatley and Duncan's (1992) findings. Examples of tertiary teachers' positive emotional engagement with their teaching and their students were evident, as also were examples of emotional labour investment. Overall the results were comparable to findings reported elsewhere on the emotions of teachers in middle and secondary schools, suggesting a universality of emotions in teaching irrespective of teaching level and previous career experience. This diary study was one part of a multi-method study. Future research directions are discussed.

Key words: *Emotion experience, Tertiary teaching, Tertiary teachers, Daily incidents of emotion, Emotional intelligence, Emotion regulation, Emotional labour*

Introduction

Despite an increasing body of research internationally on the role that emotions play in teaching efficacy and learner achievement, little attention has been paid, particularly in Aotearoa New Zealand, to this role in respect of tertiary education teachers and students. Of the research that has been conducted in New Zealand, there is emerging evidence of the need for tertiary teachers to pay attention to emotions in teaching and learning. For example, recent research suggests that New Zealand tertiary students' continued enrolment beyond the first year is influenced by teachers using methods that create interest and make 'learning exciting' (Leach, Zepke, & Prebble, 2006, p. 127). Greenwood and Te Aika (2009) have reported the need for tertiary institutions to acknowledge the emotional and spiritual needs of Māori students, with 'the burden of such recognition' resting on the teachers (2009, p. 90). Fitzpatrick and Spiller (2010) highlighted the importance, for New Zealand tertiary teachers, of being aware of their emotional

state whenever they have opportunity to reflect on their practice. We considered that documenting aspects of emotion in respect of the tertiary teacher could contribute to an understanding of emotion relative to tertiary-sector teaching and point the way forward for further research.

The study presented in this article was born out of the positive responses over recent years from tertiary teachers studying towards the Diploma in Adult Teaching and Learning to the principal researcher's teaching on the role of emotion in teaching and learning. Because the content of these sessions was based primarily on findings on teachers in middle school (e.g., Sutton & Conway, 2002) and secondary school (e.g., Naring, Briet, & Brouwers, 2006), the diploma students (tertiary teachers) suggested the need for New Zealand-based research set within the tertiary sector. We therefore applied to and obtained funding from Ako Aotearoa¹ to undertake a multi-method study of the 'emotion experiences' of teachers in tertiary teaching. Our research aims were to document and explore the following:

1. The range of emotions experienced by a group of tertiary teachers during teaching situations;
2. The emotional regulation goals and strategies of these tertiary teachers;
3. The self-reported subjective well being and emotional regulation strategies of these tertiary teachers using existing psychometric measures²;
4. Future directions for research into emotions in tertiary teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In this report, we focus on the diary study component of our research project. Future papers will cover the other areas.

Literature

Previously, emotions in psychology were regarded as 'disruptive or regrettable' (Oatley & Nundy, 1996, p.267). Today, emotions are seen as a central component of human functioning (Lazarus, 1991; Oatley, 1992). Hargreaves (1998) states that 'emotions are at the heart of teaching...[and] good teaching is charged with positive emotion' (p. 835). There is now increasing empirical evidence in the educational psychology literature that:

1 Ako Aotearoa is New Zealand's National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence. See <http://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/ako-aotearoa>

2 *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985); *Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire* (Fordyce, 1977); *Positive and Negative Affect Schedule* (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988); *Assessing Emotions Scale* (Schutte et al., 2009).

...emotions profoundly affect students' and teachers' engagement, performance and personality development, implying that they are of critical importance for the agency of educational institutions and society at large (Pekrun & Schutz, 2007, p.314).

Hargreaves also argues that we cannot dismiss the role of emotions, whether negative or positive, in teaching because 'all organizations, including schools, are full of them' (1998, p.835).

Our theoretical perspective of emotion is drawn mainly from the theories of Lazarus (1991) and Oatley (1992), whose diary design is 'strongly relevant to cognitive theories' (Oatley & Duncan, 1992, p.260). Lazarus (1991) defines emotions as 'organized cognitive-motivational-relational configurations whose status changes with changes in the person-environment relationship as this is perceived and evaluated (appraised)' (p.38). Oatley's (1992) theory also acknowledges that our emotions underpin our 'cognitive processes for integrating multiple and sometimes vague goals' (p.43) that we have in different situations and interactions with other people. This means that individuals respond emotionally and often quite differently to what is happening around them, depending how they interpret this in relation to their goals or intentions. For example, in an education setting, one teacher may respond angrily to students' challenging questions, while another might feel excited because challenging questions demonstrate critical thinking. Teachers may also respond to similar situations differently on different occasions depending on what else is going on for them. Lazarus (1991) believed that emotions tell us how we 'are getting along in [our]...worlds' (p.40). He explains this idea further in his consideration of the basic emotions of happiness and anger, arguing that the most common reason or 'core relational theme' for happiness is 'reasonable progress towards the realization of our goals' (p.267). For anger, it is 'a demeaning offence against me or mine' (p.222). Anger, according to Rivers, Brackett, and Salovey (2008), also signifies thwarted goals. For example, students were the majority 'triggers' (Sutton & Conway, 2001, p. 6) for teachers' anger and frustration when they were not paying attention and not following instructions (i.e thwarted teaching goals), compared to teachers' satisfaction when students made good progress in school (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

Lazarus (1991) also theorised that different emotions tend to elicit different actions, or 'action tendencies' (p.59), which Oatley describes as a 'state of readiness' (p.50). This helps explain why people behave the way they do when experiencing certain emotions. For example, the dominant action tendency in

anxiety is avoidance, whereas in anger it is primarily attack (Lazarus, 1991; see also Boekaerts, 1993). A person feeling both anxious and angry at the same time is, according to Boekaerts, likely to experience conflicting action tendencies; he or she may want to withdraw but also, at the same time, may also want to attack. This form of internal conflict 'may involve heavy cost' (Boekaerts, 1993, p.279) in terms of personal energy and not being able to pay attention to what needs doing at the time.

The ongoing self-regulation individuals engage in when maintaining, creating, managing, and displaying the appropriate emotions for any given interpersonal situation, is referred to as 'emotional labour', a term first introduced by Hochschild (1993, p.7). Having investigated the emotional labour of professionals in service roles, such as flight attendants and health care workers, Hochschild concluded that these workers need to engage certain emotions in order to meet the expected standards and norms of their work. The teaching profession, says Hargreaves (1998), has similar standards and norms. As such, 'emotional labour is an important part of teaching, in many ways a positive one [because it]...puts care into context' (1998, p.840). He explains his meaning here by saying that society expects teachers to emotionally engage their students by showing that they care for them and their learning. Sutton and Wheatley (2003) point out the converse of this idea: teachers may believe that they should not display negative emotions, such as frustration, when teaching; a mandate that requires them to constantly monitor and regulate their emotions while working with students (Sutton, 2004). Alternatively some teachers may 'fake anger' (Sutton, 2004, p.334) as a management strategy. Naring et al. (2006) have identified the risk that teachers may 'pretend certain emotions' (p.311) and/or consciously suppress negative emotions, leading to emotional exhaustion. Ideally, argues Hargreaves (1998), teachers should *genuinely* feel the important positive emotions, such as enthusiasm and passion. For Naring and colleagues (2006), the genuine experience of positive emotions denotes 'emotional consonance, which is the state of effortlessly feeling the emotion required' (Naring et al, 2006, p.304). The opposite experience is emotional exhaustion, which is a key characteristic of burnout syndrome (Naring et al).

According to Clegg (2000), a 'significant' amount of emotional labour is expended in tertiary teaching contexts (p.460). Teaching as a profession has high rates of stress and high burnout (Kokkinos, 2007; Naring et al., 2006). However according to Brackett et al. (2008), 'teachers who are more skilled at regulating their emotions, tend to report less burnout and greater job satisfaction' (p.336).

Emotion regulation or management is a key component of emotional intelligence (EI), which 'refers to the capacity to both reason about emotion and use emotion to enhance thinking and problem solving' (Rivers et al., 2008, p.440). Rivers and colleagues suggest that EI has four behavioural components—managing emotions, understanding emotions, using emotions, and perceiving emotions—and that managing one's emotions first requires the ability to perceive and understand these. The growing acceptance of the concept of emotional intelligence (Salovey, & Mayer, 1990) has led to the development of emotional intelligence training programmes to develop and enhance workers' ability to manage their own emotions when interacting with others, with varying degrees of empirically proven success (Boyatzis, 2008; see also Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009). The teachers who participated in Maurer and Brackett's (2004) Emotionally Literate Schools Project, a school-based workshop intervention directed at increasing students' emotional intelligence scores, reported learning emotional skills, including improved stress management (Brackett et al., 2008). Their students not only gained higher emotional intelligence scores but also enhanced their academic performance.

As Naring et al. state, 'While it is important to investigate what makes people exhausted, there is increasing interest in what makes people enthusiastic about their work and what makes them feel competent' (2006, p.313). This focus fits well with the approach taken within the field of positive psychology, which is 'the study of positive aspects of human experience' (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003, p.113). Psychology, according to Csikszentmihalyi and Hunter, should be not only about reducing pathology, but also about understanding the qualities that make life worth living. For example, accumulated evidence from studies of daily emotions has shown that happiness is related to the 'frequency of positive as opposed to negative moods' (Oatley & Duncan, 1992, p.253). The diary study reported here was the first step in finding out whether tertiary teachers' emotions experienced on a daily basis would reveal what makes their teaching lives worthwhile. Linking back to Lazarus's (1991) theory, the emotion dairies should shed light on how well the tertiary teachers were getting along in their worlds.

Method

Four tertiary institutions (one university, one polytechnic, and two private training providers) were approached through their executive officers or managers and informed consent was obtained for the principal researcher to attend their staff meetings and invite staff to participate in this study. Interested staff then

contacted the principal researcher, anonymously if they wished. The identities of the participants have been coded to protect their personal and institutional identities. We gave each participant an 'emotion diary' (developed by Oatley & Duncan, 1992) (Appendix 1). Diaries provide an 'intentional remembering' (Oatley & Duncan, 1992, p. 252) self-report system to encourage participants to notice and record their emotions, their internal experiences and external events. We asked the participants to record up to four emotional experiences per day for five days. The diaries also obtained personal (demographic) information including age, gender, and number of years spent teaching. The first question asked participants to indicate whether the emotional state constituted a 'mood' or 'emotion'.³ These were explained as follows:

You can recognize an emotion when:

- a bodily sensation happens (such as your heart beating faster), or
- you have thoughts coming into your mind that are hard to stop, or
- you find yourself acting or feeling like acting emotionally.

You can recognize a mood when:

- you have a feeling of some kind that lasts for more than about an hour.

The next question asked, 'What name would you give the emotion or mood?' This was followed by a list of categories from which participants were asked to also tick any of those that appeared to fit. Work by Rosenberg and Ekman (1995) shows that the fixed choice paradigm accurately reflects the verbal categories people use when they have free choice as to labelling. Participants were then asked to work through a series of questions and checklists for each emotion they reported. We shall present and discuss specific questions as we report the results. Quantitative data were elicited through checklist type questions and qualitative data through the explanations that were requested. The diary data were entered into EXCEL.

After the participants had completed their diaries, the principal researcher interviewed each one. The interviews were semi-structured in format to investigate the teachers' emotion regulation goals and strategies. We then asked the participants to complete, online, a set of psychometric tests focused on emotional wellbeing and satisfaction with life. All data were coded for anonymity.

³ Oatley (1992) regards moods as emotional in that they are based on exactly the same kinds of action readiness as emotion. He and colleague Johnson-Laird (1987) describe moods as 'maintained states ... [that] do not have the compulsiveness of an emotion episode (and may be) punctuated by waves of more distinct emotions' (p. 24). Because, in our research, we were primarily interested in *what* emotions or moods, the participants experienced, we decided to collate and report both as emotions.

(e.g., TT1 or Tertiary Teacher 1, TT2, and so on). This article reports the data from the diaries.

Fifteen participants across the four tertiary institutions completed diaries. Fourteen agreed to be interviewed, and 12 completed the questionnaires. Six of the participants were female, and nine were male. The females ranged in age from 40 to 57 and had been teaching from between less than a year and 13 years. The males ranged in age from 40 to 66 and had been teaching from between one and 30 years. The participant who was not interviewed was one of the males and the two who did not complete the questionnaires were males.

Results

Number and types of emotions reported

The 15 tertiary teachers reported a total of 147 emotions during 113 emotion events over the five-day period (Table 1). Of the total 147 emotions reported, 82 were negative and 65 were positive. Over the five days, the average number of events recorded per tertiary teacher was 7.5 ranging from five (one per day) to 20 (four per day). A single reported event sometimes consisted of two or more emotions, which explains the higher number of emotions in comparison to the number of events in Table 1. Six teachers reported a single event for each of the five days and one teacher recorded the maximum of four per day. The most frequently reported positive emotion was happiness/joy, reported 14 times. The most frequent negative emotion was anger, reported 13 times. These results were similar to the results from Oatley and Duncan's (1992) study of 57 students (ages 17 to 22), who each completed a total of five incidents each. We obtained 113 emotion incidents from 15 tertiary teachers compared to their 286 incidents. The mean rate of just under two reports of happiness per participant for Oatley and Duncan's students was higher than the rate in our study of just under one report of happiness per participant, but this needs to be considered in relation to 0.66 reports per participant (10 events across 15 tertiary teachers) of satisfaction, noted in earlier research as a frequently reported positive emotion amongst teachers in general (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Oatley and Duncan also found a high rate of fear in their student sample, likely due to examinations or having to do presentations. In a second diary study, Oatley and Duncan (1992) found that a group of employed people, with a mean age of 33 years (range 18 to 56), reported anger more frequently than happiness (reasons were not included).

Table 1: Number of times emotions reported over 113 emotion events** by 15 tertiary teachers*

Positive emotions	Time	Negative emotions	Frequency
Caring	2	Anger	13
Comfortable	8	Boredom	4
Confident	6	Despair	6
Enthusiasm	9	Disgust	3
Fascination	2	Disappointment	12
Happiness/joy	14	Disillusionment	9
Love	1	Fear	6
Pride	5	Frustration	11
Satisfaction	10	Guilt	3
Surprised	8	Powerlessness	6
		Sadness/grief	6
		Stress	3
Total reported	65		82

Notes:

* Using Oatley and Duncan's (1992) categories

**Total emotions reported exceed the number of events due to more than one emotion report per event.

The teachers' free-choice labels for happiness/joy included excitement, neutral, gratification, relief, pleased, good, feeling in control. For anger, they included irritation, 'p...d off', cross, stubbornness. One teacher reported annoyance, yet did not categorise this as anger. This teacher ticked the categories of confident and comfortable, explaining that the feelings were 'annoyed yet relaxed'. The five reports of pride were associated with student achievement. Four of these five reports also featured satisfaction.

The lowest frequencies for positive emotions included one report of love, and two each of caring and fascination. TT6 explained his report of love as 'the wonderful feeling of caring' he had for his students. TT14 associated caring with satisfaction. Fascination occurred in conjunction with other positive emotions. For example, TT12 was surprised by and fascinated with the positive attitude of his class, and TT9 reported being happy, fascinated, satisfied, surprised, confident, proud, and comfortable during the incident reported below:

Initially, I was presenting a prepared lesson. Subsequently, students hijacked the lesson and started teaching themselves. Especially gratifying was the fact that they didn't want to go, they ran on into their own time.

Stress and guilt were the least-reported negative emotions, with only three occurrences each. Boredom was reported on four occasions. Although stress, triggered by lesson preparation related to 'major issues and complaints so we have to get it right!' (TT2), it was also reported in conjunction with other negative emotions, namely disappointment on one occasion and tiredness and determination on another. Guilt also was reported either singly (e.g., when TT6's cell-phone rang just after he had instructed the students to turn theirs off) or in conjunction with other negative emotions (twice). Boredom was reported once by three different teachers (during marking, reluctance to assist a student, and having to listen to another colleague 'going on'), and by yet another teacher in conjunction with other negative emotions.

Incidence of mixed emotions

All but two of the teachers reported at least one incident of mixed emotions, which they interpreted as having either a combination of solely positive or solely negative emotions or a combination of both. For TT6, nearly all of his 20 recorded incidents featured mixed emotions:

I am an emotional person who through training is able to recognize and modify negative emotions and moods reasonably quickly, so over a day I have significant underlying emotions/moods, coupled with more fleeting examples.

Of the 113 emotion events reported in Table 1, 35 (31%) were ticked as changing during the experience. This result is almost identical to Oatley and Duncan's (1992) finding that 30% of the emotion incidents that the students reported changed in type during the event. Some of the changes remained within the same valence (i.e., negative or positive); the others switched. TT7, for example, was disappointed when a student was not prepared to participate in an important activity, and then felt joy 20 minutes later when the student came back, ready to take part. Frustration followed disappointment for TT7, who felt disappointed that half of his class had not returned after lunch and then frustration 'because the system allows this—[that] we only teach the students who want to be there.' TT15 said that his feelings of frustration and irritation changed to satisfaction

and caring after finding a solution for a student who had been not performing well. Examples of positive emotions changing within valence included, for TT14, 'satisfaction to comfortability', along with 'caring':

Students had finished putting their engines back together for skill development. As they connected up and started their engines, they were nervous & then excited when they started and ran. I was standing back working more of a guidance role.

TT12 wrote that his emotions changed from 'very happy to absolutely delighted' with a class that, rather than 'complain and tell us what is wrong with our system, ALL of this group wanted to pass and learn from us. A huge shift in attitude. Normally the negatives really get to you—NOT this class.'

Emotions that stayed the same were usually either positive or negative. For example, TT1 felt confident for five hours because of the sense of being 'on top of my work', but then felt 'angry and cross' for another five hours on a different occasion due to students not responding as she thought they should, given the extra help she had given them. This teacher also reported another occasion, also five hours in duration, when she felt 'angry and cross'. This time, the trigger was a management-influenced situation.

Balance of negative and positive emotion experiences

When examining the proportion of positive to negative emotion experiences at an individual level, the average percentage of positive emotion events recorded by the 15 participants over the five days was 48%. For 11 of these teachers, up to half of all the emotion experiences were positive. For the remaining four, 50% or more of their emotion experiences were positive. These figures, however, need to be interpreted within the context and duration of their occurrence. For example, TT13, with 9% positive events, reported 10 negative events and one positive, with both types of experience lasting as long as 'all day'. TT5, with 80% positive emotions, reported four positive emotion events, one per day, and one negative, with each emotion lasting for between two minutes to two hours.

Bodily sensations associated with emotion incidents

Negative emotions were most frequently associated with the diary options of tenseness, feeling hot, heart beating, and feeling sweaty (see Table 2).

Table 2: Number of specific bodily sensations reported for positive and negative emotions

Sensation	Positive emotions	Negative emotions
Tenseness	2	7
Trembling	1	0
Stomach	2	3
Heart beating	2	4
Feeling sweaty	1	4
Feeling hot	1	5
Feeling cold	0	2
Other	0	2
Total	9	27

Of the total 36 emotions associated with bodily sensations, 27 related to negative emotions. TT4, for example, experienced tension associated with anger and frustration for eight hours due to being inconvenienced by a colleague. This event happened at 2.00 p.m., which meant that she experienced tension until 10.00 that night. Seven of the 10 events TT13 reported included mentions of tension. Four of these experiences lasted ‘all day’. Negative emotions associated with tension for TT13 included disappointment, stress, and boredom. He added, alongside the checklist, that he felt ‘tired and exhausted all day’. In contrast, on the single occasion that TT13 reported happiness and joy, he described feelings of ‘warmness’ and ‘laughing’ that lasted for ‘three to four hours—the rest of that late morning ... when it was one of the days when it *happens* for the student. They have done it and saw for themselves’ (emphasis his). Sometimes, the bodily sensation did not last long, but was intense. TT1 experienced the full gamut of autonomic disturbance for 15 minutes when necessary equipment was unavailable in the classroom, despite pre-planning. She wrote that she managed to ‘cover up’ her emotions so that the students did not see her ‘panic’.

Although *tiredness* was not provided as an option in the diary, four tertiary teachers reported experiencing this. TT13, for example, wrote ‘tired and exhausted which lasted all day’ on a day that he described as ‘tension plus’. TT11, who was dealing with grief from a personal bereavement throughout the diary study, explained one occasion of recording grief in her diary as follows: ‘... finished the tasks of the day on a non-teaching day when I no longer had that focus; I was conscious of a heaviness in my mood.’ She then wrote, ‘I felt tired, a bit numb,’ and said this feeling lasted five hours. TT3 reported feeling tired while teaching, but she added in contentment and ticked happiness and joy: ‘I got tired but now

trying to keep my energy up and students engaged.' She noted this under the 'acting emotionally' category and wrote 'forcing enthusiasm'. This feeling lasted two hours. On another occasion, this teacher noted down tiredness, stress, and determination. The experience, she said, lasted three hours from the time that she 'noticed students flagging so injected extra energy & change of pace...[so I] acted more energetic than I felt.' TT14 reported tiredness along with relief (which he associated with the happiness/joy category), which lasted five minutes, at 'the end of class and the end of the week 2.30pm on a Friday afternoon.... As the last student packed his bag and left the room, I felt a wave of emotion go over me and those words go through my mind, 'Yes, you've made it'.

Thoughts associated with emotion incidents

When asked, in the diary, to answer the question, 'Did thoughts come to mind that were hard to stop?' the participants ticked the given responses and added others of their own. The response, 'What will I do next?' attracted the largest number of responses in relation to both positive and negative emotions (see Table 3). Nine teachers ticked this response for both positive and negative emotion events, and six of these nine also ticked or added other responses. For example, when TT11 reported her emotion experiencing grief and a feeling of heaviness at the end of the school day, she selected the response 'Other', and then wrote, 'I thought about sleeping and how this would provide relief.' When TT3 noticed she was tired, she thought to herself, 'Just keep the energy up until the end of the day.' On another occasion, when TT3 reported feeling stress, anger, irritation, powerlessness, and disillusionment over an event where she 'felt like the meat in the sandwich' between management and students, she reported her thoughts as 'holding onto my anger so I don't vent. They really don't care so they won't do anything.' Although TT14 did not tick thought options, he did write that words went through his mind.

Table 3: Number of types of thoughts reported for positive and negative emotions

Thought	Positive emotions	Negative emotions
Replaying an incident from the past	5	6
Thinking what I will do next	10	14
Thinking that this goes in a completely different direction from what I expected	2	8
Other	2	3
Total	19	31

Several teachers indicated that their thoughts involved replaying an incident from the past. The emotion triggering the event was as likely to be positive as negative (see Table 3). TT11 said she thought about a past incident in relation to a time when she felt satisfaction and comfort: 'I was starting the day on campus – walking from my car to my office, being immersed in my professional role/life. Then I reflected on the past few days,' which included her bereaved situation. TT15 reported replaying past incidents at times when he felt happy and confident. TT1 replayed incidents from the past when feeling irritated with management, who had 'got it wrong again'. TT7's feeling of frustration over 'the system' was heightened, he wrote, by thinking about what was happening in the present and then relating it to what had happened in the past.

Action taken in response to the emotion

When participants were asked, in the diary, if they acted or felt like acting in some way in response to what they were feeling, they tended to tick the response items 'act emotionally' or 'facial expression' (see Table 4). These actions were associated with a similar number of positive and negative emotions. Not unexpectedly, the response 'withdraw' was associated more with negative emotions than positive.

Table 4: Number of actions/felt like acting reported for positive and negative emotions

Type of behaviour	Positive emotions	Negative emotions
Act emotionally	7	8
Facial expression	7	6
Withdraw	2	8
Aggressive	1	2
Closer	1	1
Other	5	6
Total	23	31

In relation to the earlier described event in which TT3 tried to keep her energy up, she noted under the 'other' action response that she forced enthusiasm, and 'acted more energetic than I felt'. TT3 was also the only teacher to tick the response 'aggressive' and one of the two teachers who ticked 'withdraw'. These actions were ones she wanted to take during an event that she said elicited mixed emotions, although she ticked the positive emotion column on the diary checklist:

I was teaching—that was enjoyable if challenging. Then the teacher who follows me arrived in the lab, was grumpy, unfriendly, critical and rude. He started yelling at his students over the top of me, getting rid of my students. He was xxxxed off and showed it.... I would have lost control if I had to stay in his classroom.

The other teacher who reported wanting to withdraw in relation to a positive emotion also came from an event that triggered the mixed emotions of fear and surprise. He wrote that he wanted to withdraw because of a 'student questioning a comment I had made, challenged me'.

Perceived causes and effects of the emotions reported

As Table 5 shows, students were the most commonly attributed triggers for both positive and negative emotions. What teachers thought they themselves had or had not done was the next most frequent trigger. Eight participants attributed the cause of at least one experience of happiness to students and nine participants attributed the cause of at least one experience of anger to students. Four of these two groups of participants reported students as triggers of both positive and negative emotions. Several participants reported students in conjunction with other matters as triggers of their emotions. TT1 attributed feeling happy to both a student and herself (i.e., what she had done) when 'talking to student about work and seeing good progressive work & enthusiasm from student.' TT12 attributed feeling 'very satisfied and delighted with the amount of marking completed and the quality' to both students and what he (the teacher) had done in relation to 'marking duty'.

Table 5: Number of types of cause reported for positive and negative emotions

Type of cause	Positive emotions	Negative emotions
Student	14	13
You did or didn't do	5	8
Remembered past experience	5	2
Imagined something	5	3
Nothing in particular	3	3
None of above	5	3
Total	37	32

Several participants attributed causes across two or more categories. TT4, for example, attributed all five of her emotion events (two positive and three negative)

to students or colleagues. TT11 attributed three occasions of positive emotions (happiness and satisfaction) and one of anger to remembering a past experience. This participant experienced anger when a conversation with a colleague about a political issue reminded her of an earlier upsetting incident. For happiness and anger the more general categories included reasons of general wellbeing and love of teaching and students (ticked five times by TT6) and management or other staff. The reports of emotion incidents that 'seemed not to be caused by anything in particular' or that were due to 'none' of the options provided were similar in number.

Additional information on emotions

Only seven participants completed the final page of the diary, which, in addition to eliciting brief responses about ease of using the diary, asked, 'Are there important things about your emotions that we have not asked about?' The following comments are illustrative of the teachers' responses:

I believe people's moods/emotions change quite rapidly dependent on engaging environment. I think my emotions change from one situation to another, not in the same situation. (TT 1)

I am not really an emotional person or if I am I don't recognize it very well—perhaps reflection may help this. (TT 15)

I know that I am having emotions all the time as I react to situations—the only ones that I notice are ones to the extremes and usually 'bad ones'. (TT 14)

I found it hard to recall a lot of emotions and as you are busy in the classroom interacting with students you don't get opportunities to reflect on moods etc. (TT 14)

[It was difficult] ... mainly because at end of day I just want to forget those days that were negative. (TT 4)

Discussion

Comparison of the tertiary teachers' emotion experiences with those of other teachers reveals a number of similarities. For example, Sutton and Wheatley (2003), having reviewed the 'limited' (p. 327) research on teachers' emotions, found that the positive emotions reported by the teachers were 'paralleled by their reports of negative emotions, especially anger and frustration' (p. 333). This

was evident in the tertiary teachers' reports also. When identifying the sources of their emotions, the tertiary teachers provided reports remarkably similar to those of the middle-school teachers in Sutton and Conway's (2001) study. For both groups, the main trigger of anger and frustration was students' non-compliance. Colleagues and management were the next main triggers.

Consideration of the core emotion themes of happiness and anger shows that the tertiary teachers' experiences aligned with Lazarus's (1991) core relational themes. Thus, most negative emotions were related to non-achievement, whether in relation to planned activities or student achievement. Most positive emotions related to things going well and according to plan. As Lazarus (1991), observes, '...if there is goal relevance, then any emotion is possible including love; if there is goal congruence, then only positive emotions are possible including love' (p. 72). Many of the explanations that the tertiary teachers gave for their positive emotions, such as happiness, joy, and pride mirrored those given by the middle school teachers in Sutton and Wheatley's (2003) review. Students' progress in their learning and achievement, especially if they have struggled initially, was a major source of satisfaction for both groups of teachers (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

The tertiary teachers barely reported emotions involving caring and love, which is interesting given that these two emotions are those 'most often discussed in the literature' (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003, p. 332). This finding may reflect the differences in ages of the groups taught by tertiary and middle-school teachers. One of our tertiary teachers used the word love to describe his feelings about teaching. This teacher, having described what triggered his feelings of love and caring, went on to explain that he had received training in a personal development programme, and could therefore recognise and manage his emotions. This apparent positive relationship between his perspective and empirical findings on emotional intelligence as a skill that can be learned (Brackett et al., 2008; Csikszentmihalyi, 2003) warrants further investigation, especially in regard to the potential of offering pre- and in-service teachers empirically-supported 'emotional literacy' (eg Maurer & Brackett, 2004) courses.

In our study, tension was the bodily sensation or 'autonomic disturbance' (Oatley & Duncan, 1992, p. 263) most frequently experienced during an emotion event, and it was, not surprisingly, considerably more likely to be associated with a negative emotion than a positive one. Oatley and Duncan's (1992) findings in respect of 'tenseness' (Oatley & Duncan, 1992, p. 263) show a similar pattern of more tension reported for anger than happiness. The reports of tension, in

conjunction with the reports of tiredness and exhaustion from our teachers suggest that some of them may be at risk of emotional exhaustion (Naring et al., 2006). The tertiary teacher in our sample who reported feeling tired and added in words such as 'forced' and 'acted enthusiasm' is an almost tailor-made example of Naring and colleagues' concern about teachers having to 'pretend [or]...surface act' (p. 311) positive emotions during the course of their work. These findings, albeit from a very small sample, indicate a need for more investigation into the emotional labour (Hochschild, 1993) of tertiary teachers.

The emotions that the tertiary teachers reported experiencing align with Lazarus's (1991) and Oatley's (1992) acknowledgements of the interplay between cognitive and affective responses to the events that occur during teaching and learning. The diaries that the tertiary teachers completed during the study did not specifically ask whether the thoughts they experienced arose before, during or after an emotion event. In other words, we made no effort to determine if thoughts acted as an antecedent to or in line with the emotion. What we have been able to show is that cognition and emotion were linked for most of the tertiary teachers in our sample, and that, for some of the teachers, the thought related to what they could do (what action they could take) about the emotion. This type of response implies a strategic approach to managing the emotion. It also implies an ability on the part of the teacher to observe and reflect on the event triggering the emotion. However, there were also teachers who tended to attribute (to think about) the causes of their emotions to people or matters outside of themselves, such as their students. When, as Bandura (1997) suggests, people perceive their self-efficacy in general being impacted upon by outside factors, they may not see the need to reflect on their role in the experience. Most human motivation, he says, is cognitively generated: people 'form beliefs about what they can do' (p. 122). This might suggest that teachers' emotional self-efficacy beliefs mediate their emotional experiences through the exercise of personal control over thought, action and affect. Considerations such as these are important for future research on the role of emotions at all levels of teaching, not just at tertiary level, as they may be relevant in helping teachers develop emotional regulation strategies that have the interrelated effect of enhancing their teaching ability and their mental and physical wellbeing (Sutton, 2004). The teacher in our study who said she would rather not think about the negative emotions that occurred during the day nevertheless felt anger and tension right up until 10.00 at night on one occasion. The opportunity to learn and build the skill of emotional regulation could make a difference to teachers who would like to manage that type of experience differently.

In summary, the descriptions and explanations given by the tertiary teachers overall reveal a high level of emotional engagement and emotional energy investment in their teaching and in their relationships with their students. They also reveal a level of emotion awareness that for some is greater than they acknowledge themselves. They also show a strong commitment to managing their emotions professionally and in the best interests of their students. These general findings are consistent with findings on teachers' emotions in other settings. The down side of this commitment for teaching has also been hinted at in the small number of the teachers who – over the duration of this study – described how tiring it can be at times – even exhausting. Sutton and Wheatley (2003), have suggested that perhaps there is 'some ratio of positive to negative emotions that individuals need to experience in order to cope with and be satisfied in their jobs' (p. 347). There is good evidence that teachers can be trained in managing their emotions while teaching, for their own sakes and for the sake of the academic outcomes of their students. Tertiary teachers play an important role in guiding the future workforce. Tertiary teachers could play a significant role in modelling emotional self-management and regulation skills for the future workforce with the positive implications this might have for not only the emotional labour of teaching but the emotional labour of the vocational domains for which they are preparing students.

Conclusion

This study sheds light on the daily incidents of emotion in the everyday lives of a small sample of tertiary teachers. Its findings, particularly in respect of tertiary teaching, add to the growing body of literature on emotions in teaching. As such, these findings suggest that there is a universality of emotions experienced in teaching as a profession no matter what the level of the education system or the setting in which teaching takes place. For the tertiary teachers in this study, the similarities of their experiences to other teachers were evident, irrespective of their previous careers or employment experience. The findings also indicate several areas for future research and teaching practice, especially in respect of emotional regulation. We wish, however, to acknowledge a number of limitations in the present study, limitations that also have relevance for future research on emotions in teaching.

The first concerns the continuing debate about the validity and reliability of self-report as a methodology. Oatley and Duncan (1992) sum up the two sides of the debate as follows: (1) people's behaviour and mental states may be influenced by

factors that cannot be accessed even through reflection; and (2) we should take a 'more pluralistic view' rather than an 'outmoded' behaviourist perspective (p. 281). They argue that 'most emotions as people experience them and as reported in diaries are subjective phenomena and have an objective existence' (p. 282). In their view, the fact that people can complete diaries such as the one they designed and that we used in our study supports this second claim. Csikszentmihalyi and Larsen (1992, p. 56), and Lazarus (1991) present similar arguments. Csikszentmihalyi and Larsen, for example, state that self-reports can be defended as 'a very useful source of data' (p. 26), especially emotion data (Lazarus, 1991). The second limitation is reactivity, a happenstance that occurs when repeated self-assessments of emotions lead people to apply unusual attention to their internal states and own behaviours (Rathunde, 1993). Third, we acknowledge that this is a small sample and the results cannot be generalised. Fourth, we have not considered the role of gender, culture, cultural beliefs or differences in cultural norms of emotions in this study. Fifth, these diaries are the teachers' records of just one week in their teaching lives. Anecdotally we know that we can have good weeks and bad weeks. However, the diary findings reported in this article are but one component of a multi-method study, and the findings are sufficiently consistent in pattern with findings from previous similar research to suggest that they warrant attention.

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